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1 Demons and Disease¹

When one wants not only to take stock of the current state of research on the topic “Ancient Christianity and Medicine, Health, and Disability”, but also to enrich it with new contributions, it is perhaps useful first of all to keep in mind two basic methodological insights that by now can be considered to constitute a standard for any attempt to engage with this topic. After a short introduction into these methodological assumptions, I will examine a number of different kinds of ancient texts in order to address the question of how demons function in these texts *as a basis for explaining* disease and their cure. Then, I will consider to what extent pagan concepts of demons were transformed or adopted in these texts. In other words, I am concerned in particular with different types of text or genre in ancient literature. Of course, this narrowly defined avenue of enquiry means that we will only consider a very small excerpt of the sources that one could term – if one wanted to systematise them – “Christian demonology”. In his monograph on the relationship between the battle against demons and the emergence of monasticism, David Brakke wrote an important chapter in a future overall account of ancient Christian demonology,² for which there exists some preliminary work in encyclopaedias and synopses.

1 Two fundamental methodological insights

I would like to explicate the *first of these two fundamental methodological insights* by taking as a not unproblematic example my own contribution to a previous Oxford patristic conference: in 2003 I spoke at the XIVth International Conference on Patristic Studies on pagan and Christian incubation and healing through healing sleep.³ My lecture traced not only the commonalities and divergences between pagan and Christian incubation but also posed the classic question of the “adoption” of the relevant healing method from pagan sources into Christian contexts at particular locations – at that time in Oxford three findings of possible cult continuities were a particular subject of discussion: the transformation of the Asclepius sanctuary at the foot of the Acropolis in Athens into one of the churches dedicated to the Ἀνάργυροι Cosmas and Damian; the conversion of a temple presumably dedicated to Asclepius or Apollo in Dor, to the north of the ancient provincial capital Caesarea in Palestine, into a church; and finally the conversion of the sanctuary of Κύρα Μενούθι, to Isis, in

¹ This is a slightly revised version of a paper that appeared in *Studia Patristica* 81 (2017) and is republished with kind permission of Peeters.

² Brakke (2006). Cf. also Nicolotti (2011).

³ “Christians and Asclepius? Ancient Christianity and the Healing Cults”, published as: Markschies (2008) (with 16 illustrations and a discussion of the lecture on pages 273–284).

Menouthis, twenty-five kilometres east of Alexandria, into a church of the saints Cyrus and John under Cyril of Alexandria. Considerable difficulties arise here however in trying to prove direct cult continuities: in Dor there is only clear archaeological evidence of a Hellenistic temple. There is no evidence of a temple from the imperial period. No excavations in Menouthis have yet been carried out. And only in Athens can it be shown that there was probably a continuation of the pagan cult into the fifth century⁴ and thus a direct cult continuity. Whether the double-naved hall, which in the Athenian sanctuary can be considered an incubation hall on account of the general building typology of such halls,⁵ was still used in Late Antiquity in the pagan sanctuary as it was at that time in reduced form in the Christian church, remains a more or less hypothetical consideration. To summarise the findings somewhat more pointedly than I did twelve years ago in Oxford: there, where we have literary reports on the practice of incubation in Christian churches and pilgrim sanctuaries, we cannot prove a cult continuity in these places either in the literary sources or the archaeological sources, but at the very most postulate with more or less good arguments. This example not only shows how difficult it is to make use of the classic paradigm of an adoption of pagan medicinal practices in Christianity in concrete cases. In my view, these findings show how problematic this paradigm is. For this reason Sarah Coakley, who has in the meantime presented an instructive, interdisciplinary collection of contributions to the topic of the transformation of pain,⁶ spoke after my Oxford lecture in 2003 in general terms on the problems of the classic model of German religious history, which presupposes the reception or adoption of certain resources of knowledge and practices, which are conceived of as existing in blocks, from one religious system to another – just as is the case with the healing method of incubation. Several years ago, David Brakke and others published an anthology of a conference that had the title “The Reception of Antique Religion and Culture in Judaism and Christianity”. The anthology, owing to the debates that en-

4 Cf. here the discussion of the lecture mentioned above and the contributions by Beat Brenk, Hugo Brandenburg and Tomas Lehmann. Thus in Marinus, *Vita Procli* 29 (24 Boissonade), we find the story of a woman called Ἀσκληπιγένεια who is healed following the prayers of Proclus in the temple of Asclepius at the foot of the Acropolis, nearby which the philosopher lived: ὁ δὲ Ἀρχιάδης ἐπ’ αὐτῇ μόνῃ τὰς ἐλπίδας ἔχων τοῦ γένους, ἥσχαλλε καὶ ὀδυνηρῶς διέκειτο, ὥσπερ ἦν εἰκός. ἀπογιγνωσκόντων δὲ τῶν ἱατρῶν ἦλθεν, ὥσπερ εἰώθει ἐν τοῖς μεγίστοις, ἐπὶ τὴν ‘ἐσχάτην ἄγκυραν’, μᾶλλον δὲ ὡς ἐπὶ σωτῆρα ἀγαθὸν τὸν φιλόσοφον, καὶ λιπαρήσας αὐτὸν ἡξίου σπεύδοντα καὶ αὐτὸν εὐχεσθαι ὑπὲρ τῆς θυγατρὸς. ὁ δὲ παραλαβὼν τὸν μέγαν Περικλέα τὸν ἐκ τῆς Λυδίας, ἄνδρα μάλα καὶ αὐτὸν φιλόσοφον, ἀνῆκει εἰς τὸ Ἀσκληπιεῖον προσευξόμενος τῷ θεῷ ὑπὲρ τῆς καμνούσης. καὶ γὰρ ἡτύχει τούτου ἡ πόλις τότε καὶ εἶχεν ἔτι ἀπόρθητον τὸ τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἱερόν. εὐχομένου δὲ αὐτοῦ τὸν ἀρχαιότερον τρόπον, ἀθρόα μεταβολὴ περὶ τὴν κόρην ἐφαίνετο καὶ ῥαστώνῃ ἐξαίφνης ἐγένετο· ῥεῖα γὰρ ὁ Σωτῆρ, ὥστε θεός, ἰᾶτο. συμπληρωθέντων δὲ τῶν ἱερῶν, πρὸς τὴν Ἀσκληπιγένειαν ἐβάδιζε καὶ κατελάμβανεν αὐτὴν ἄρτι μὲν τῶν περιεστώτων τὸ σῶμα λελυμένην παθῶν, ἐν ὑγιεινῇ δὲ καταστάσει διάγουσαν. – Admittedly there is no mention here of an incubation cult and Christian measures against the sanctuary are already to be found (namely in the formulation ἔτι ἀπόρθητον τὸ τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἱερόν).

5 Cf. here especially Riethmüller (1995).

6 Coakley/Kaufman Shelemay (2007).

sued at the conference, has the programmatic title “Beyond *Reception*”; for indeed in our sources one cannot observe any block-like adoption of stable entities in dual constellations that one could describe as the reception of “Antiquity” in “Christianity”.⁷ The fact that you cannot find proof, either in the archaeological or literary sources of an “acquisition” of the pagan practice of incubation in the basic sense of a local verifiable cult continuity with the Christian practice of incubation, ought to have already made me pause for thought during the preparation of the Oxford seminar paper in 2003.

One could of course interpret these findings with regard to the incubation sanctuaries, which had already become well known in 2003, first of all in a *religious history* fashion. Then one would have to point out however, that, in modelling the competition between religions in Late Antiquity according to the principles of market economics, it becomes clear that religious offerings on the market of religions needed to differentiate themselves and not only be able to come along as pure adoptions of successful business models (as indeed the incubation).⁸ One can however make use of the lack of evidence for the continuity of incubation sanctuaries in the literary and archaeological evidence also to make a fundamental methodological insight into dealing with the topic “Ancient Christianity and Medicine, Health, and Disability”: the classic model of the adoption of pagan ancient medicine in Christianity should be replaced by a model of a transformation of knowledge bases where nothing is adopted in blocks, but rather something is reconstructed using the available elements. It is not therefore the case that something is simply received, but rather as part of the process of absorption, the reference area is also newly formed at the same time. The Berlin cultural scholar Hartmut Böhme coined the term “Allelopoiese”, taken from the Greek words ἀλλήλων and ποίησις, for this dual transformation and argued that we should no longer speak of “reception” but rather of “transformation”.⁹ I would like to suggest that this theoretical insight into the constitutional conditions of cultural change be also used as a basis for the topic of “Ancient Christianity and Medicine, Health, and Disability”. Adopting this paradigm of the “transformation of the ancient world”, I, together with Ulrike Bruchmüller, Eva Elm, Tomas Lehmann, Jannis Politis, Anna Rack-Teuteberg and Dorothea Zeppezauer have been researching the transformation of ancient healing cults in ancient Christianity in Berlin since 2004 as part of a special research area of the same name, “Transformationen der Antike”, funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft. I have furthermore examined the significance of corporality for healing processes and in recent years I have been involved in research on demons; what I am present-

⁷ Marksches (2006). Cf. of course also: Betz (1998).

⁸ For the paradigm of an economics of religion cf. Iannaccone (1992) and *ibid.* (1998) and Stark (1996).

⁹ Böhme (2011).

ing here has also profited from conversations with these current and former Berlin colleagues.¹⁰

Now I would like to explicate *the second of the two basic methodological insights* even more briefly: if one examines recent scholarship in our topic, it is common to differentiate – as for example in the recent Freiburg habilitation dissertation by Gregor Emmenegger on the influence of ancient medicinal and natural philosophical theories on the development of the Christological dogma¹¹ – between temple medicine, Hippocratic-Galenic and so-called folk medicine.¹² It is clear from the highly antiquated term “folk medicine” however, that the assumed sociological differentiation in levels of education between healers themselves as well as between the healed is inadequate, because, as is well known, during the imperial period (for example in Pergamon) temple medicine was carried out thoroughly on a level that was scientific according to ancient standards. Similarly problematic seems to me the differentiation between “high medicine” and “low medicine” that John Riddle put forward a number of years ago.¹³ As Emmenegger observes, it is difficult to draw a clear line between the healing procedures of so-called folk medicine and those of “scholarly” medicine: amulets, incantations and other magical practices often belonged as a matter of course to the repertoire of a healer, regardless of his institutional home or his level of education.¹⁴ A suggestion by the Berlin historian of medicine Paul U. Unschuld has long convinced me, whereby, in addition to an institutional differentiation of temple or sanctuary, medicinal-philosophical school and free lanced healers, we also distinguish between a medicine that is scientific according to ancient standards and other ways of healing – although this sociology of education based binary is of course unclear.¹⁵ Ultimately it is a matter in each case of individual network structures of medicinal knowledge of entirely different kinds,¹⁶ knowledge that we today categorize as scientific, magical or indeed as folk medicine. These different kinds of knowledge are each hierarchised according to different criteria and can, in view of current medical classification of diseases, also be hierarchised differently once again.¹⁷ To put it more simply: in many cases it may well have depended simply on the individual instance, on the specific form of an illness, whether an ancient healer or doctor applied a bandage soaked in honey or spoke an incantation.¹⁸ There were of course attempts to differentiate between different kinds of healing

10 On this project cf. a special edition of *Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum/Journal of Ancient Christianity* 17 (2013): *Heil und Heilung. Inkubation – Heilung im Schlaf: Heidnischer Kult und christliche Praxis*, pp. 1–159.

11 Emmenegger (2014).

12 Emmenegger (2014), 16.

13 Riddle (1993).

14 Önnersfors (1993).

15 Unschuld (2009) and *ibid.* (1995).

16 Here I draw upon: Sarasin (2011).

17 Detel (2009), 184–186. In general: Mittelstrass (2004) and Anacker (2004).

18 Cf. Nutton (1991).

methods and to differentiate between permitted and forbidden practices in individual schools, but these schools did not succeed in establishing a consensus across the empire.

We now come to the question of how in different ancient types of texts and literary genres demons serve as a *basis for explaining* the causes of diseases as well as their remedy and to what extent pagan as well as Jewish concepts of demons were changed or adopted.

2 Demons in ancient (Christian) magical amulets

In Late Antiquity, demons could be talked about at very different levels. I will begin my survey with that form of practised religion that becomes apparent from magical amulets¹⁹ and I will look at three quite different examples, the first one taking an *extremely negative view of demons*: an amulet on papyrus from the fourth century, which is kept in Vienna and is presumably from Arsinoe and was used against a whole range of maladies.²⁰

At the beginning of this text there is a formula in which a demon (Greek δαιμόνιον) is invoked “which has the feet of a wolf, but the head of a frog”. Frogs were already described as impure spirits in the canonical Book of Revelations, where it is stated that they come forth from the mouth of the devil and live like demons in filth.²¹ In Antiquity, the wolf had a much more negative image than today and was seen as a greedy hunter, bloodthirsty and sexually deviant.²² Behind this formula is obviously the notion that the frog-headed and wolf-footed demon in question was responsible for prolonged fever.²³ When the fever is ordered to leave the body in the name of the “four gospels of the son” and the “God of Israel”, then the demon also leaves the body at the same time.²⁴ The fact that first the fever

¹⁹ On this cf. Betz (1996); Gager (1992), 1–41; Brashear (1995); Vakaloudi (2000); de Bruyn/ Dijkstra (2011); Sanzo (2014).

²⁰ For the text cf. footnote 24 below.

²¹ Αποκ. 16.13f.: Καὶ εἶδον ἐκ τοῦ στόματος τοῦ δράκοντος καὶ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος τοῦ θηρίου καὶ ἐκ τοῦ στόματος τοῦ ψευδοπροφήτου πνεύματα τρία ἀκάθαρτα ὡς βάρραχοι· εἰσὶν γὰρ πνεύματα δαιμονίων ποιοῦντα σημεῖα, ἃ ἐκπορεύεται ἐπὶ τοὺς βασιλεῖς τῆς οἰκουμένης ὅλης συναγαγεῖν αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸν πόλεμον τῆς ἡμέρας τῆς μεγάλης τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ παντοκράτορος. – Cf. Weber (1972), 535.

²² Kitchell Jr. (2014), 199–201.

²³ Luijendijk (2014), 421f.

²⁴ P. Rain. 1 = P. Graec. 337 Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Wien = Van Haelst, *Catalogue*, No. 1002, p. 318 = PGM 10 (Papyri Graecae Magicae 2, 218,1–13 Preisendanz/Henrichs): [ὁρκίζω ὑμᾶς κατὰ τῶν τεσσάρων εὐαγγελίων τοῦ υἱοῦ ... ἢ τριῖταϊον ἢ τεταρταῖον ἢ ... διδων δὲ πυρετῶν ...]|| ἀναχώρησον ἀπὸ τοῦ [δεῖνα, φοροῦντος τὸ θεοφυλακτὸν τοῦτο, ὅτι προστάσσει σοι ὁ ἰ θεὸς τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ, ὃν οἱ ἄγγελοι εὐ[λ]λογοῦσι καὶ ἄνθρωποι δε[ε]δίασι καὶ πᾶν ἰ πνεῦμα φρίττον. πάλιν ... δαυ[ι]μόνιον, οὗ τὸ ὄνομα σμ[... ἰ οραν καὶ φοραν [...ἰ το ἔχων πόδας λύ[κ]ου, τοῦ δὲ ἰ βατράχου τὴν κε[φαλήν ... ἰ. Finally on the text see Förster (1999), No. 36, p. 47; cf. also Meyer/Smith (1999), 44–45.

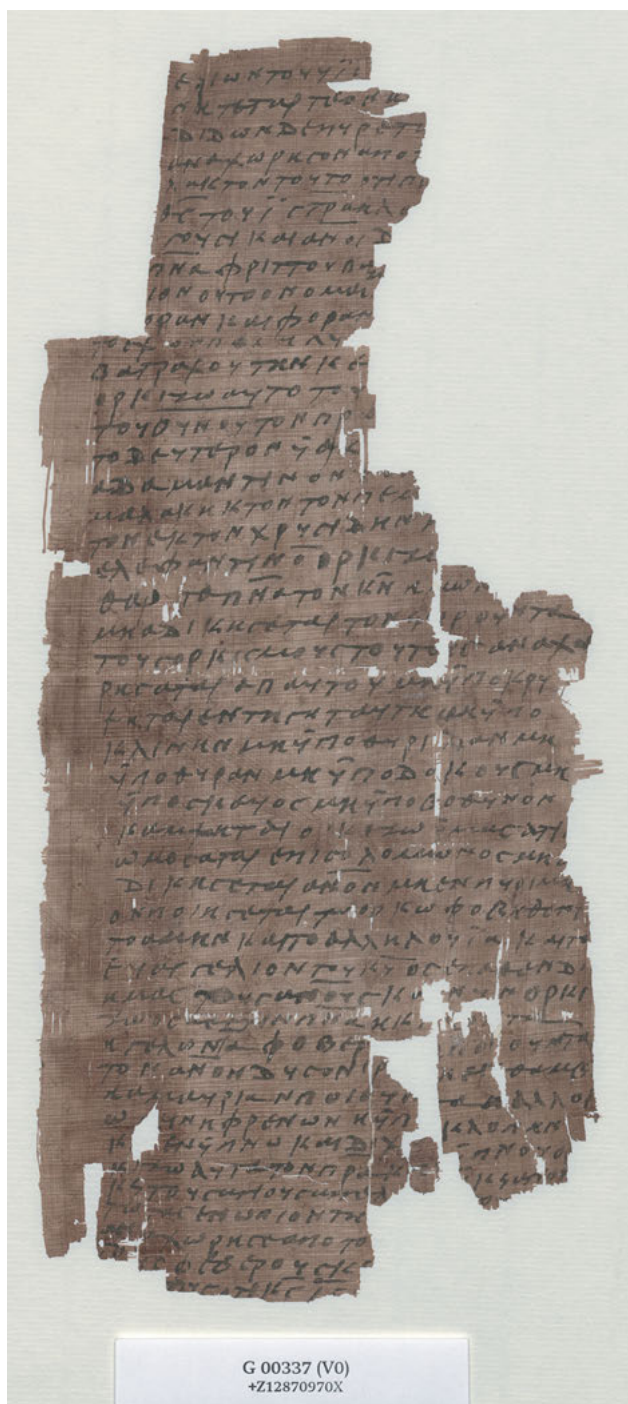


Fig. 1 P. Rain. 1 = P. Graec. 337 ÖNB, Wien = PGM 10

and then the demon are ordered to leave the body in the text of this amulet shows that the relationship between the fever and the demon is perceived to be so close that the actual order in which they were invoked did not particularly matter. Also notable is the extraordinary accumulation of power necessary to drive out such a demon. It is not enough to merely speak a simple invocation in the name of a saint, for example. The person calling out the invocation must make sure he has an accumulation of the highest authorities on his side against the frog-headed and wolf-footed demon. In the amulet in Vienna, the authorities called upon are the gospels of the Lord and the God of Israel, one after the other. In the Late Antique silver amulet with an exorcism – the “*Tablette magique de Beyrouth*” – which is kept in the Louvre in Paris, far more are called on: fifty angels as well as the God at the top of Mount Sinai, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, the living God. The “*Tablette magique de Beyrouth*”, which was originally folded to the size of a small capsule, contains a formula (which, by the way, is also testified in modified form by the “*Lamella Bernensis*”, a Late Antique gold amulet stored in Bern) that is supposed to offer protection²⁵ “from every demon and from every compulsion of the demons and from demonic powers” as well as “from every demon, male and female, during the night and during the day”.²⁶

Worn attached to important parts of the body such as neck, arms, legs or the feet, worn day and night and made of precious materials like silver or gold, the amulet works – as it says on one papyrus in the British Museum – to protect the body from demons (σωματοφύλαξ) and as a seal (σφραγίς)²⁷ against them – demons that were felt to be an omnipresent threat. By 1924, Henri Leclercq had collected those amulets that were used against very specific diseases, against nose bleeds, problems with the gall bladder, gout, colics and other everyday, but still unpleasant complaints. However, neither the Greek term “demon” nor specific physical entities are described and no names are named;²⁸ obviously the order to exit the body and the power that came from naming divine authorities that an amulet of this kind contained or recited was sufficient.

25 Lines 8–11 ἀπὸ παντὸς δέμονος καὶ πάσης ἀνάγκης <ς> δενόμων | καὶ ἀπὸ δεμονίων – quoted here after Gelzer/Lurje/Schäublin (1999), 52. Cf. also Gager (1992), 232–234 and Kotansky (1994), no. 52, 270–300.

26 Lines 110–116 διαφυλάξατε Ἀλεξάνδραν ἀπὸ παντὸς δεμονίου ἀρενικοῦ καὶ θηλυκοῦ καὶ ἀπὸ πάσης ὀχλήσεως δεμόνων νυκτηρινῶν (Gelzer/Lurje/Schäublin 1999, 56); Parallels to formulation and presentation *ibid.* 84f.

27 Papyri Graecae Magicae VII, 580–584 = BL P. Graec. CXXI (PGM II, 26, 580–584 Preisendanz/Heitsch/Henrichs): Φυλακτήριον σωματοφύλαξ πρὸς δαίμονας, πρὸς φαντάσματα, | πρὸς πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πάθος· ἐπιγραφόμενον ἐπὶ χρυσοῦ | πετάλου ἢ ἀργυροῦ ἢ κασιτερίνου ἢ εἰς ἱερατικὸν χάρτην φοροῦ· | μενον σφραγιστικὸς ἐστίν. ἔστιν γὰρ δυνάμειος ὄνομα τοῦ | μεγάλου θεοῦ καὶ σφραγίς. Cf. also Betz (1992²), 134 (Morton Smith) and <http://www.trismegistos.org/tm/detail.php?tm=60204> (Last access on 24.01.2016).

28 Leclercq (1924), 1847–1854. Cf. now Kotansky (1994), *passim*.



Fig. 2 Tablette magique de Beyrouth (Musée du Louvre, Bj 88, Inv. M.N.D., 274) ©Copyright: bpk / RMN – Grand Palais / Hervé Lewandowski (70375634).

But apparently there existed also quite the opposite notion, that – very unlike the amulets I have mentioned so far – a demon could also be used in a positive way in order to heal diseases (a correspondingly ambivalent picture of the character of demons was still reported at the beginning of the 20th century, for example, in the devoutness of Palestinian Bedouins²⁹). There are also examples of this on magic papyri:

In Berlin, one (slightly damaged) papyrus that Adolf Erman dated in 1895 to the 7th or 8th century and which also comes probably from Arsinoe, contains an only superficially Christianised, originally clearly pagan healing spell.³⁰

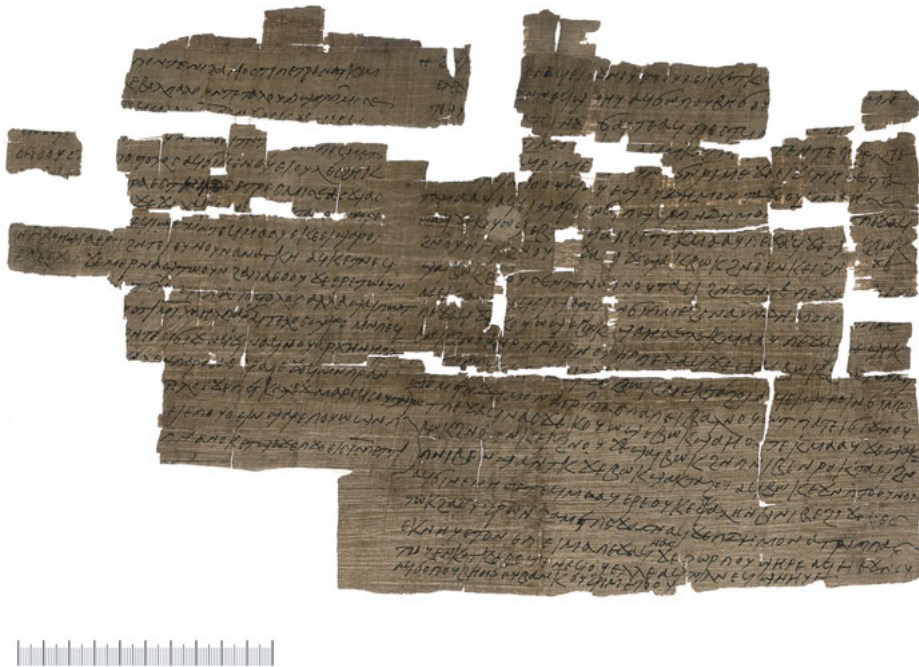


Fig. 3 P. Berolinensis 8313^{recto}

(Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz) ©Copyright Fig 3 and 4: bpk / Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung, SMB / Sandra Steiß (70247682, 70247679).

²⁹ Canaan (1914), 6–27.

³⁰ P. Berolinensis 8313, Col. II^{recto et verso}; text edited by Adolf Erman in *Aegyptische Urkunden aus den Koeniglichen Museen zu Berlin* (1904), No. 1, p. 2–3; cf. also Erman (1895), 43–46 and 47–51 and *ibid.* (1917/1918), 301–304. Another treatment of the text is to be found in Kropp (1931), 9–12 (translation and commentary). – A new edition is being prepared by Siegfried Richter and Gregor Wurst, cf. Richter (1997), 835–846. Cf. also <http://www.trismegistos.org/tm/detail.php?tm=98044> (Last access on 24.01.2016).

According to statements by the trader, the papyrus was part of an entire bundle of documents that contained not only other healing spells, but also a love spell, invocations of the Archangel Michael as well as recipes for magic potions.³¹ Erman assumed that this bundle of papyri belonged to a Christian magus who was working in the early Islamic era, which is made clear by Arab characters on one of the texts.³² The papyrus from this bundle that we are interested in first of all describes how Horus tests several demons to see how fast they can reach his Mother Isis, who is far away, so that she can come in a hurry and heal his stomach ache:³³

“(Jesus!) Horus [the son of] Isis went upon a mountain in order to rest. ... He had pain, and the area around his navel [hurt him], and he wept with loud weeping, saying, ‘Today I am bringing my [mother] Isis to me. I want a demon so that I may send him to my mother Isis’.”³⁴

These demons, all of which bear the – still not really explained³⁵ – Greek name Agrippa come to Horus and speak with him. Horus chooses the demon that goes to Isis “in the time it takes you to draw breath through your mouth” and be back “by the time you breathe out through your nose”,³⁶ that is, a very fast demon. Thus far the text comes across as a testament of purely pagan religiosity. However, at the beginning of the text, the name Jesus is placed before the name Horus³⁷ and there is also a Christian invocation at the end of the text: “Every disease, every pain, every suffering that is in the body ..., cease immediately! It is me, the Lord Jesus who calls you, the one, who brings healing”.³⁸

One can therefore speak of a pagan survival in a Christian context³⁹ or of the transformation of a pagan healing spell by means of appropriation (an existing reference is taken out of its original context and integrated into the culture of reception)

³¹ P. 8324 as well as p. 8314, 8320 and 8325, all edited in *Aegyptische Urkunden aus den Koeniglichen Museen zu Berlin* (1904): No. 18, p. 16 and No. 33, p. 4; No. 2, p. 3; No. 4, p. 5. Translation by Kropp (1931) 21–22 (p. 8314); 23–24 (p. 8320); and 24–25 (p. 8325) as well as (Meyer/Smith), 1999, 159–160 (p. 8314); and 160–161 (p. 8325). Cf. also <http://www.trismegistos.org/tm/detail.php?tm=92891> (Last access on 24.09.2019).

³² Vakaloudi (1999), 87–113.

³³ On such “narrations” cf. Frankfurter (1995), 451–470; cf. Kropp (1930), 7f. and 147.

³⁴ P. Berolinensis 8313, Col. II^{recto} 1–6 (after Erman): ἰϥ ϣωρ[πωηρε νη]σε αχει εχην-ογτοογ βενκοτκ ... νε[κω]τε ντεφρελπε [.....] αφριμε ϣν-ογνοσ νριμε χε-ειχι νησε τα [μαα]γ εροι νποογ αιογεω-ογλνμον ταχοογч φανσε таηααγ αχει φарοι νει-πωорп илнмон ...

³⁵ Perhaps a reminiscence of ἀγρυπνία as a reference to the constantly running, never sleeping demon? In general cf. Frankfurter (2007), 453–466.

³⁶ P. Berolinensis 8313, Col. II^{recto} 17–19 (after Erman).

³⁷ P. Berolinensis 8313, Col. II^{recto} 1–6 (after Erman), as footnote 34 above.

³⁸ P. Berolinensis 8313, Col. II^{verso} 6–8 (after Erman): χε-φone νιη ϣι-ϣισε νιη ϣι-τιτκας νιη ετϣν-ϣηтч ενιη πωννιη μαρεφλο ητεγνογ ανοκ εтнογте пχοεic ἰϥ πεтти νιπталсо ϣ; the translation quoted here is by Marvin Meyer and Richard Smith in Meyer/Smith (1999), 95–97, but slightly modified.

³⁹ Zentler (2011), 49–54.

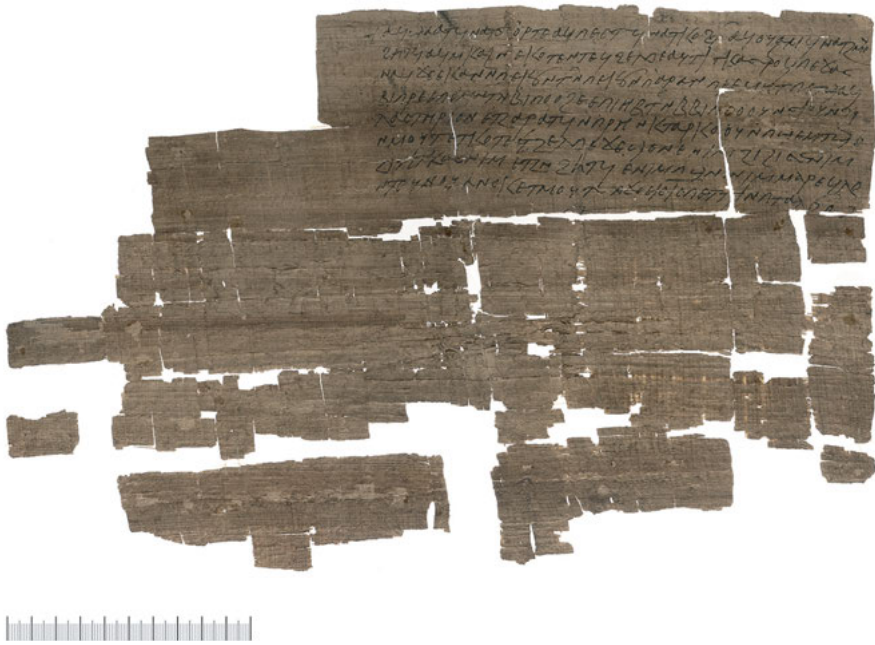


Fig. 4 P. Berolinensis 8313^{verso}
(Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz)

and encapsulation (an object is handed down unchanged and integrated as a closed whole).⁴⁰

If one looks again at these findings from the papyri and amulets, one cannot simply say that the term “demon”, which had good, neutral, ambivalent or negative connotations within the pagan context, had lost its wide range of use in Christian context and was reduced by Christians to the bad.⁴¹ This might apply for the official Christian religion as standardised by bishops and synods (“religion as prescribed”⁴²); as such, the *Decretum Gelasianum de libris recipiendis et non recipiendis* states that “all amulets must be treated as apocryphal”, ... “that were not written by the names of the angels, as believed, but far more by the names of the demons”.⁴³ Lived Christian religion beyond such standards (“religion as practised”), as shown in the Berlin papyrus taken from the bundle of the magus, could certainly expect a

⁴⁰ On the terms used here, cf. among others Bergemann (2011), 48–49.

⁴¹ Thus (with evidence) Colpe (1976), 546f. and Cancik (2003), 447–460 = *ibid.* (2008), 344–356.

⁴² Stander (1993).

⁴³ *Decretum Gelasianum* V 8.6 (TU 38/4, 57,333–58,335 von Dobschütz): *Phylacteria omnia quae non angelorum, ut illi confingunt, sed daemonum magis nominibus conscripta sunt apocrypha* *ibid.* 319f. and further evidence in Eckstein/Waszink (1950), 407–409.

demon to fulfil a positive function by healing illnesses such as stomach ache or colics. If, as this text testifies, the demons could also take on a *positive* function in a Christian prayer, then the pagan tradition of invisible companions, of *daimones* and *genii*, who were entrusted with the worries of mankind, are transformed – like elsewhere in ancient Christianity – into a Christian context.⁴⁴ But here, the notion of an invisible protector, which one could describe along with Peter Brown as an “upwardly extension of the person” into a divine sphere,⁴⁵ is not transformed into the worship of personal guardian angels and saints, but is rather received in a far more authentic way by maintaining the term “demon” or – to once again phrase it using the Berlin terminology – by encapsulating it.

As mentioned above, notions of demons of this kind were often categorised as “folk belief” and the use of the corresponding amulets and papyri for healing purposes was referred to using the term “folk medicine”, more in a derogatory than in an objective fashion. However, amulets were also used by highly educated medical practitioners who had been trained in the famous schools of the Antique. Alexander of Tralles, an educated physician in 6th century Rome, for example, used amulets and incantations in his work as a matter of course and he believed that they would help him to succeed: “The reasonable physician must disregard no means”.⁴⁶ Even if very recently in the German-speaking region, a bold attempt was once again made to rescue at least the term “popular piety” for the academic analysis of Early Christianity,⁴⁷ it seems to me that this term will be facing the same fate as the German terms “people’s baths” and “people’s library” – that is, it will disappear, because the underlying dual of popular piety and elite piety⁴⁸ does not describe the historical situation.⁴⁹ “Folk belief” and “folk medicine” were always accused of suffering from a deficit of rationality, as very recent critical de-

⁴⁴ Brown (1991).

⁴⁵ Brown (1991), 57.

⁴⁶ Alexander, *Therapeutica* I 15 (I, 571,22–573,4 Puschmann): καὶ δεῖ πανταχόθεν βοηθεῖν τὸν ἐπιστήμονα καὶ φυσικοῖς χρώμενον ἐπιστημονικῶς λόγῳ καὶ μεθόδῳ τεχνικῇ καὶ τὸ λεγόμενον πάντα κινεῖν τὰ καλῶς σπεύδοντα μακρᾶς νόσου καὶ μοχθηρᾶς ἀπαλλάξαι τὸν κάμνοντα. ἐγὼ δὲ φιλῶ πᾶσι κεχρησθαι. διὰ δὲ τοὺς πολλοὺς τοὺς ἐν τῷ νῦν χρόνῳ ἀμαθεῖς ὄντας καταμέμφεσθαι τοῖς χρωμένοις τοῖς φυσικοῖς, ἔφυγον συνεχῶς χρῆσθαι τοῖς φύσει δρᾶν δυναμένοις καὶ ἔσπευσα τεχνικῇ μεθόδῳ περιγενέσθαι τῶν νοσημάτων.

⁴⁷ Gemeinhardt (2013).

⁴⁸ Particularly pleasing in Schmidt-Clausing (1962), 1452: “Popular piety is an embellishment around the cultic-liturgical elements of a high religion” (“Volksfrömmigkeit ist Rankenwerk um das Kultisch-Liturgische einer Hochreligion”); but also cf. already at this point the cautious distancing from paradigms: “calling popular piety [Volksfrömmigkeit], ‘superstition’ or ‘magic’, also ‘primitive religion’, is not sufficient according to the results of today’s religious folklore, since these terms include an a priori censorship of the inferior” (“die Beurteilung der V. als ‘Aberglaube’ oder ‘Magie’, auch als ‘primitive Religion’ ist nach den Ergebnissen der heutigen religiösen Volkskunde nicht ausreichend, da diese Begriffe von vornherein die Zensur des Unterwertigen enthalten”) (ibid.).

⁴⁹ Holzem (2002).

bates on the concept in medical history and in ethnology have held on to in particular.⁵⁰

It makes more sense, to my mind, when talking about such magic formulas that expect the help of demons, not just to maintain that they suffer from a deficit in rationality but rather to describe the specific rationality that can be observed here. Some time ago, Wolfgang Wischmeyer following Fritz Graf spoke of a “rationality *sui generis*” behind such magical medicine practised by healers: “Like the physicians, they assume the empirical. They see their observations as causal thinking”.⁵¹ From an effect – a disease – they conclude a cause: demons. Somatic dysfunctions and a demonic function (even a malfunction) are immediately and causally linked. Wischmeyer concludes his considerations on a provocative note when he picks up on an observation by Graf: “The claim of philosophical and scientific thinking to be rational and plausible is similar to the claim of magical thinking”. If there were differences, then – as Graf states – these tended to be in the area of cosmology,⁵² depending on whether divine beings like demons or anatomical, geological and physiological interaction between the body, metabolism and climate were made responsible for the function or dysfunction of an organism. One could certainly take this provoking analogy formulated by Graf and Wischmeyer between Hippocratic-Galenic and magical-medical rationality a little bit further: both the philosophically and scientifically founded way of thinking and magical thinking strive in medicine for a ritualisation of knowledge. The Hippocratic-Galenic medicine strives to gain power over dysfunction through craftsmanship ritualised in the routine of treatments while magic medicine strives for the magical craftsmanship to gain power over demons and their function in the body.⁵³ In other words, the different knowledge systems in the Hippocratic-Galenic and the magic medicine integrated to some extent very similar pools of knowledge, but gave them a different hierarchy and only partially integrated the religious knowledge concerning demons into their respective knowledge systems. With respect to demons, secure and manageable knowledge was of particular importance to many people in Antiquity, because demons were thought to be very sensitive spirits who populated heaven and earth in great numbers. It was also thought that they lurked practically everywhere, got up to no good especially at noon⁵⁴ and in the evenings, and could cause serious harm to people even in the case of the smallest wrongdoing.⁵⁵ On the other hand, picking up on an anonymous author in the tradition of Plato by taking a closer look at his speech “On the Art of Healing” we could attempt to find out more precisely where the difference between the two rationalities – the Hippocratic-Galenic and the magic – lies. The anonymous

⁵⁰ For examples see Badura (2004), 27f. Compare also Weissenrieder in this volume.

⁵¹ Wischmeyer (1998), 93 with reference to Graf (1996).

⁵² Graf (1996), 33f.

⁵³ Wischmeyer (1998), 94.

⁵⁴ On the relationship between the so-called midday demon and malaise cf. Crislip (2005).

⁵⁵ Müller (1976), 761–797, in particular 772f with reference to Delatte/Josserand (1934).

author points out that “there is no craftsmanship (τέχνη) that does not exist. It would be absurd to think that something that does exist does not exist ... I don’t know why one can believe that those things that exist do not exist, although one is able to see them with the eyes and recognize them that they do exist”.⁵⁶ A real categorical difference between two rationalities exists when and only when, because of basic cosmological or metaphysical assumptions, it is denied that demons cause diseases and thus influencing demons with magic can have no influence on what course an illness takes. A categorical difference of this kind is behind Galen’s attempt to explain the effect of an amulet (on a child, and made of the root of the peony) when treating epilepsy without the involvement of a divine power.⁵⁷ However, one cannot take the metaphysical scepticism⁵⁸ of a single, albeit highly popular medical writer from imperial times with an excellent education in philosophy as *pars pro toto* for the entire school of thought. And one certainly cannot turn competitive struggles among different professions to gain patients and their financial means into ideological disputes of interpretation.

3 Demons in ancient (Christian) philosophical texts

Philosophical texts certainly did argue for the rationality of the causal relationship between demons and diseases. Plutarch, like Porphyry, had blamed the plague, hunger and war on evil demons,⁵⁹ and we find in the Chaldean Oracles at the latest the

56 Ps.-Hippocrates, *Ars medica* 2,1 (CUFr V/1, 225,9–15 Jouanna): Δοκεῖ δὴ μοι τὸ μὲν σύμπαν τέχνη εἶναι οὐδεμία οὐκ εἶδω· καὶ γὰρ ἄλογον τῶν ἐόντων τι ἡγεῖσθαι μὴ ἐνεόν· ἐπεὶ τῶν γε μὴ ἐόντων τίνα ἂν τις οὐσίην θεησάμενος ἀπαγγέλλειεν ὡς ἔστιν; εἰ γὰρ δὴ ἔστι γ’ ἰδεῖν τὰ μὴ ἐόντα, ὥσπερ τὰ ἐόντα, οὐκ οἶδ’ ὅπως ἂν τις αὐτὰ νομίσειε μὴ ἐόντα, ἃ γε εἴη καὶ ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἰδεῖν καὶ γνώμῃ νοῆσαι ὡς ἔστιν· – cf. here Elm (2014), 57–64.

57 Galenus, *De simplicium medicamentorum temperamentis et facultatibus libri* III 10 (IX, 859,14–860,3 Kühn): καὶ οἶδά γέ ποτε παιδίον ὀκτῶ μηνσὶ μὴδ’ ὅλως ἐπιληφθὲν ἐξ ὅτου τῆς ρίζης ἐφόρει, ὡς δ’ ἀπερρύη πως ἀπὸ τοῦ τραχήλου τὸ περιάπτον, εὐθύς ἐπελήφθη, καὶ αὐθὺς τε περιαφθέντος ἑτέρου πάλιν ἀμέμπτως εἶχεν. ἔδοξε δέ μοι κάλλιον εἶναι καὶ αὐθὺς ἀφελεῖν αὐτὸ πείρας ἔνεκα, καὶ οὕτω πράξαντες, ἐπειδὴ πάλιν ἐσπάσθη, μέγα τε καὶ πρόσφατον μέρος τῆς ρίζης ἐξηρήσαμεν αὐτοῦ τοῦ τραχήλου, κἀντεῦθεν ἤδη τοῦ λοιποῦ τελέως ὑγιῆς ἐγένετο ὁ παῖς καὶ οὐκέτ’ ἐπελήφθη.

58 Thus Walzer (1972), 778 with reference to *Quod animi mores corporis temperamenta sequantur* (IV, 772, 16–20 Kühn): Ὅτι μὲν οὖν τρία τῆς ψυχῆς ἔστιν εἶδη καὶ ὅτι ὁ Πλάτων βούλεται ταῦτα, δι’ ἑτέρων ἐπιδέδεικται, καθάπερ γε καὶ ὅτι τὸ μὲν ἐν ἡπατι, τὸ δ’ ἐν καρδίᾳ, τὸ δ’ ἐν ἐγκεφάλῳ καθιδρύται. On the critical objections that Galen had against arguments that he had heard in Jewish and Christian schools, cf. Strohmeier (2006) and Van der Eijk (2014).

59 Plutarchus, *Moralia* 26 *De defectu oraculorum* 14 417 D/E (BiTeu III, 76,18–77,1 Pohlenz/Siebeking): ἄλλ’ ὥσπερ Ἡρακλῆς Οἰχαλίαν ἐπολιόρκει διὰ παρθένον, οὕτω πολλάκις ἰσχυροὶ καὶ βίαιοι δαίμονες ἐξαιτούμενοι ψυχὴν ἀνθρωπίνην περιεχομένην σώματι λοιμούς τε πόλεσι καὶ γῆς ἀφορίας ἐπάγουσι καὶ πολέμους καὶ στάσεις ταράττουσιν, ἄχρι οὗ λάβωσι καὶ τύχωσιν ὧν ἐρώσιν and Porphyrius, *De abstinentia* II 40 (BiTeu 169,10–170,6 Nauck = CUFr II, 106f. Bouffartigue/Patillon); in particularly the beginning of the section: ἐν γὰρ δὴ καὶ τοῦτο τῆς μεγίστης βλάβης τῆς ἀπὸ τῶν κακοεργῶν δαι-

notion that evil demons are responsible for diseases: The Byzantine author Michael Psellus (or a later Byzantine Anonymous) relays a passage to this effect, which can probably be traced back to the commentary of the pagan philosopher Proclus on the Oracles.⁶⁰ The reflections of Christian scholarly authors refer to such pagan approaches towards a philosophical demonology. Two examples: The rhetorician, legal expert and philosopher *Aeneas von Gaza* propagates in his dialogue *Theophrastus* in detail about the fact that evil, material demons imitate human souls, but can also take on human form, so that they can act and speak. These might be different at different times, may divide to enter different persons and also unite again, tell the truth but also lie.⁶¹ Their materiality is that of airy entities that can imitate both a

μόνων θετέον, ὅτι αὐτοὶ αἴτιοι γιγνόμενοι τῶν περὶ τὴν γῆν παθημάτων, οἷον λοιμῶν, ἀφοριῶν, σεισμῶν, αὐχμῶν καὶ τῶν ὁμοίων, ἀναπειθουσιν ἡμᾶς, ὥς ἄρα τούτων αἰτίοι εἰσιν οὔτε καὶ τῶν ἐναντιωτάτων [τουτέστιν τῶν εὐφοριῶν], ἑαυτοὺς ἐξαυροῦντες τῆς αἰτίας καὶ αὐτὸ τοῦτο πραγματευόμενοι πρῶτον, τὸ λανθάνειν ἀδικοῦντες (169,10–18); on this also cf. Zintzen (1976), 646 f. = *ibid.* (2000), (105–125) 110 and for Plutarch Brenk (1986), 2117–2130.

60 (Ps.–?)Psellus, *Dialogus de operatione daemonum* 11 (PG 122, 844 B – 845 B = Gautier (1980), [105–194] 153,184–155,302): εἴτε οὖν οὕτως ᾤετ' ἔχειν, εἴθ' ἑτέρως, ἐξ ἐκεῖνος ἀπηρίθμησε (i.e. a monk by the name of Marcus, possibly also from the commentary by Proclus on the *Oracula Chaldaica*) γένη· καὶ πρῶτον μὲν, ὃ τῇ ἐπιχωρίῳ φωνῇ, βαρβαρικῶς ὠνόμαζε Λελιούριον, σημαίνοντος τοῦ ὀνόματος τὸ διάπυρον. Τοῦτο δὲ περὶ τὸν ὑπερθεῖν ἡμῶν ἀέρα περιπολεῖν· τῶν γὰρ περὶ σελήνην τοπῶν, ὥς ἐξ ἱεροῦ τι βέβηλον (Mss.: βλαβερὸν), ἀπεληλάσθαι δαιμόνιον πᾶν· δεύτερον δέ, τὸ περὶ τὸν προσεχέστατον ἡμῖν ἀέρα πλαζόμενον, ὃ καὶ καλεῖσθαι παρὰ πολλοῖς ἰδίως ἀέριον· τρίτον δὲ ἐπὶ τούτοις τὸ χθόνιον· τέταρτόν, τὸ ὑδραῖον τε καὶ ἐνάλιον· πέμπτον, τὸ ὑποχθόνιον· ἕσχατον δὲ τὸ μισοφαές καὶ δυσαισθητόν· εἶναι δὲ πάντα ταῦτα τῶν δαιμόνων γένη θεομοσῇ καὶ ἀνθρώποις πολέμια, πλὴν εἶναι καὶ κακοῦ φασι, κάκιον· τὸ γὰρ ὑδραῖον τε καὶ ὑποχθόνιον, ἔτι δὲ καὶ τὸ μισοφαές, ἐσχάτως ἐπιχαίρεκα καὶ ὀλέθρια. Ταῦτα γὰρ μὴ φαντασίαις καὶ λοφισμοῖς τὰς ψυχὰς ἐφρὶ κακύνειν, ἀλλ' ἐναλλόμενα, καθάπερ τῶν θηρίων τὰ ἀγριώτατα, τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐπιστεύδειν τὸν ὄλεθρον· τὸ μὲν ὑδραῖον, ἀποπνίγον τοὺς πλαζόμενους ἐν ὕδατι· τὸ δ' ὑποχθόνιον καὶ τὸ μισοφαές, ἐντός, εἰ συγχωροῦνται, προχωροῦντα τῶν σπλάγχων, καὶ οὕς ἂν τύχῃ κατασχόντα, κατὰσχοντα, καὶ ἐπιλήπτους καὶ ἐκφρονας ἐργαζόμενα· τοὺς δ' ἀέριους τε καὶ χθόνιους τέχνη καὶ περινοῖα μετιέναι καὶ ἐξαπατᾶν τὰς τῶν ἀνθρώπων γνώμας, καὶ πρὸς πάθη καθέλκειν ἄτοπα καὶ παράνομα· – Cf. here Psellus, *Summaria et brevis dogmatum Chaldaicorum expositio* (= *Philosophica minora* 39): Ἐπτά φασι σωματικούς κόσμους, ἐμπύριον ἕνα καὶ πρῶτον, καὶ τρεῖς μετ' αὐτὸν αἰθερίους, ἔπειτα τρεῖς ὑλαίους, ὧν ὁ ἕσχατος χθόνιος εἴρηται καὶ μισοφαής, ὅστις ἐστὶν ὁ ὑπὸ σελήνην τόπος, ἔχων ἐν ἑαυτῷ καὶ τὴν ὕλην ἣν καλοῦσι βυθόν (BiTeu II, 146,9–11 O'Meara). In detail on the reconstruction of Chaldean teaching Zintzen (1976), 651 f. = 112 f. and on the tradition see Svoboda (1927), 7–28 and Greenfield (1988).

61 Aeneas Gazeus, *Theophrastus* (53,19–54,10; Euxitheus is speaking): Οὕτω μεμάθηκας ὁ πάντα μαθὼν ὡς δαιμόνια κακοεργὰ καὶ ἔνυλα τὰς ἀνθρωπείας ψυχὰς ὑποκρίνεται καὶ οἱ γοητεύειν σοφίζόμενοι καὶ τὸν πάλαι τεθνηκότα καλεῖν ἐπαγγελλόμενοι οὐκ ἀνθρωπον ταῖς ἐπωδαῖς ἔλκουσιν ἀλλὰ τὸ δαιμόνιον, ὃ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου τὴν εἰκόνα, τὸ εἶδωλον, σχηματίζεται καὶ τι πρὸς ἀπάτην τερατεύεται καὶ φθέγγεται; Ἄλλ' ὁ ἥλιος ἄνω προσελαύνων τὴν κάτω σκηνὴν διαλύει· εἰ δὲ ἦν ἀνθρωπίνη ψυχὴ, καὶ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ τοῖς φιλτάτοις μάλα ἡδέως προσδιελέγετο καὶ συνδιήγεν. Ὁ γοῦν Πυθαγόρας οὐχ ὁ Σάμιος, ἀλλ' ὁ Ῥόδιος, μέλλων ψυχομαντεῖαν παραδιδόναι, τίνες οἱ καλούμενοι τὸ πρῶτον ἐπιζητεῖ, πότερον θεοὶ ἢ δαίμονες ἢ τούτων ἀπόρροια καὶ πότερον δαίμων εἷς, ἄλλοτε ἄλλος εἶναι δοκῶν, ἢ πολλοὶ καὶ σφῶν αὐτῶν διαφέροντες, οἱ μὲν ἡμεροὶ, οἱ δ' ἄγριοι καὶ οἱ μὲν ἐνίοτε τάληθ' ἐλέγοντες, οἱ δ' ὅλως κίβδηλοι, καὶ πολλὴν τῶν παλαιῶν καὶ τῶν ὕστερον ταραχὴν ὑπογράφων, τέλος προῖεται δαίμονος ἀπόρροια εἶναι τὸ φάσμα.

soul and a body.⁶² None of these views are in any way original, but can be found – argued at different levels of detail and philosophically different – already in Porphyry:⁶³ Demons that consist of pneumatic substance can incorporate matter and thus become visible.⁶⁴ The idea, which also came from Porphyry, that demons can take on multiple outward appearances, still held among the Palestinian Bedouins into the 20th century.⁶⁵

My second example of transformation of pagan philosophical demonology in scholarly Christian texts can be found in a commentary on the Platonic dialogue *Timaeus*, which the Platonic Philosopher Calcidius probably wrote in Northern Italy, perhaps Milan in the late 4th century or at the beginning of the 5th century.⁶⁶ Calcidius was presumably a Christian and dedicated his work according to the introductory letter to a certain Osius. It is highly likely that Calcidius – as later manuscripts note – served as archdeacon to the Spanish bishop Osius of Cordoba and dedicated the work to the man he served, as Jan Hendrik Waszink and others have shown;⁶⁷ the early dating of the text to the beginning of the 4th century is nevertheless still accepted by some.⁶⁸ Its partial translation by Timaeus into Latin (only a little less than the first half is translated: 17 A to 53 C) with an extensive commentary had very strong after-effects in the Middle Ages, perhaps also because it is the only fully preserved Platon commentary in Latin from Antiquity. In his commentary, Calcidius gives a kind of brief systematic excursus on demonology (*de natura daemonum*), which contains remarks about its nature, position and function in the cosmos. This excursus was provoked by the formulation in the Platonic dialogue stating that, in following Plato will not speak “about the other gods” (περὶ δὲ τῶν ἄλλων δαιμόνων or *at ... uero inuisibilibus diuinorum potestatum quae daemones nuncupantur*)⁶⁹ other than the Creator of the World. Calcidius now explains this term that was not explained in the Platonic dialogue: In his opinion there are intermediate beings situated in between God and man. This term includes the good angels on the one hand and the evil demons on the other. Calcidius separated both groups of intermediate beings in the

62 Aeneas Gazeus, *Theophrastus* (53,14–17; Theophrastus is speaking): “Ἔοικε μὲν ἄτοπα ταῦτα εἶναι καὶ οὐδὲν ἔξῃς ἀνέλεγκτον. Ἄλλ’ ἀκούεις οἷα τὰ περὶ τὰ μνήματα σκιοειδῆ φαντάσματα; Ταῦτά ἐστι τὰ ἀερῶδη τῶν ψυχῶν σώματα, ἃ δὴ εἶδωλα καλεῖται.

63 Zintzen (1976), 655–659 = 115–119.

64 Porphyrius, *De abstinentia* II 38 f. (BiTeu 167,3–169,10 Nauck = CUFr II, 104–106 Bouffartigue/Patillon).

65 Porphyrius, *De abstinentia* II 40 (BiTeu 170,2–6 Nauck = CUFr II, 106 Bouffartigue/Patillon): τὸ δὲ πάντων δεινότατον, ἐπαναβαίνουσιν ἐκ τῶνδε καὶ τὰ ὅμοια ἀναπέθουσι καὶ περὶ τῶν μεγίστων θεῶν, μέχρι τοῦ καὶ τὸν ἄριστον θεὸν τοῦτοις τοῖς ἐγκλήμασιν ὑπάγειν, ᾧ δὴ καὶ τεταράχθαι φασὶν πάντ’ ἄνω κάτω. – Cf. here Zintzen (1976), 658 = 115–118 and Canaan (1914), 15.

66 Since the magisterial edition by Jan Hendrik Waszink (Waszink 1962), two further editions have been published, by Claudio Moreschini (Mailand 2003) and Béatrice Bakhouché (Paris 2011).

67 Waszink, *Timaeus a Calcidio translatus commentarioque instructus*, Xf.

68 Madec (1998), literature on the early dating on p. 358.

69 *Timaeus* 40 D bzw. Calcidius p. 34,13f. Waszink.

same way that the usual Christian use of language does, although he does mention that both groups are called “demons” in the classic Greek-pagan language and that this common generic term is not a problem for him as a Christian.⁷⁰ The one group is made up of God’s servants, the other of the “associates of the enemy power”, as one might loosely translate the Latin *aduersae potestatis satellites*.⁷¹ Interestingly, this description of demons as “associates of the enemy power” can now be traced back to the pagan Platonist Porphyry, out of whose *Timaeus* commentary (which is almost completely lost except for a few fragments) Calcidius very likely took a great deal for his own commentary.⁷² In Porphyry it is literally the same words as οἱ τῆς ἐναντίας δυνάμεως, “the beings of the enemy power”.⁷³ Of course, such similarly sounding expressions like *aduersae potestatis satellites* and οἱ τῆς ἐναντίας δυνάμεως in both Late Antiquity Platonists mean something very different: *Porphyry* says that the demons, like the “beings of the enemy power”, are invisible and thus repeats the notion testified to by *Iamblichus*, that demons are invisible to the human eye despite a certain materiality, unlike the gods who are “beyond comprehension and understanding”.⁷⁴ “Enemy power”, or perhaps better “enemy force” – ἡ ἐναντία δύναμις – is of course in *Porphyry* a specialist term used in magic and means precisely those invisible forces that the magus binds using his own, positive energy. By comparison, with the Christian *Calcidius*, it is highly unlikely that the expression *aduersae potestatis satellites* refers simply to such enemy forces that work against the

70 Calcidius, *Commentarius in Platonis Timaeum* II 132 (173,22–174,2 Waszink): *Huius porro generis est illud aethereum, quod in secundo loco commemorauimus positum, quos Hebraei uocant sanctos angelos stareque eos dicunt ante dei uenerabilis contemplationem, summa <prudencia> atque acri intelligentia, mira etiam memoriae tenacitate, rebus quidem diuinis obsequium nauantes summa sapientia, humanis uero prudenter opitulantes idemque speculatores et executores, daemones, opinor, tamquam daemones dicti; daemonas porro Graeci scios rerum omnium nuncupant.* – On the passage cf. Den Boeft (1977), 30–31; on the problematic dual grouping of demons into good and bad, see Smith (1998), 434–35.

71 Calcidius, *Commentarius in Platonis Timaeum* II 133 (174,14–175,3 Waszink): *Nec nos terreat nomen promisce bonis et improbis positum, quoniam nec angelorum quidem terret, cum angeli partim dei sint ministri – qui ita sunt, sancti uocantur –, partim aduersae potestatis satellites, ut optime nosti. Igitur iuxta usurpatam penes Graecos loquendi consuetudinem tam sancti sunt daemones quam polluti et infecti. De quibus mox erit aptior disputandi locus; nunc de eo genere sit sermo quod ait Plato admirabili quadam esse prudentia memoriaque et docilitate felici, quod omnia sciat cogitationes que hominum introspectat et bonis quidem eximie delectetur, improbos oderit contingente se tristitia quae nascitur ex odio displicentis – solus quippe deus, utpote plenae perfectaeque diuinitatis, neque tristitia neque uoluptate contingitur.*

72 Gersh (1986), 421–434; cf. also Köckert (2009), 229–232.

73 Porphyrius, *De abstinence* II 39 (BiTeu 168,5–7 Nauck = CUFr II, 105 Bouffartigue/Patillon): δ’ ἂν εἰκότως λέγοιντο. καὶ εἰσὶν οἱ σύμπαντες οὗτοί τε καὶ οἱ τῆς ἐναντίας δυνάμεως ἀόρατοί τε καὶ τελεώς ἀναίσθητοι αἰσθήσεσιν ἀνθρωπίναις.

74 Iamblichus, *De mysteriis* I 20 (CUFr 46,23–47,1 Saffrey/Segonds): οἱ μὲν γὰρ δαίμονες ἀόρατοί τέ εἰσι καὶ οὐδαμῶς αἰσθήσει περιληπτοί, οἱ δὲ καὶ λόγου γνώσεως καὶ νοήσεως ἐνύλου προέχουσι. On the background cf. also Dillon (2004), 140.

positive energy of the magus. In his case, the “enemy force” is to be identified as the *adversarius* testified to in the Bible, namely the Devil.⁷⁵

What speaks in favour of interpreting the expression in Calcidius in this way is not only the fact that Tertullian and Cyprian had already used the substantive expression and the identical-sounding adjective in this sense and in reference to Psalm 73/74⁷⁶ (“How long will the enemy mock you, God?”⁷⁷). In fact, liturgical sources that were certainly more widely disseminated than these early Latin authors bear witness to a certain interpretation, for example, the *Missale Gothicum*. This is a collection compiled between 690 and 710 AD which presumably originates from France, more precisely, Burgundy and likely represents a Gallican formula of the church of Autun from the 7th century.⁷⁸ In a baptismal exorcism prayer from the so-called *Missale Gothicum* it says: “I banish you, you creature of the water, I banish you, all armies of the Devil, all power of the adversary, all shadows of the demons”.⁷⁹

As it had been long established in the Latin tradition, Calcidius presented demons in his commentary on a Platonic dialogue as devilish powers, as forces of the adversary. Of course, this interpretation of the demons as “forces of the adversary” among Christian commentators of Late Antiquity is not original, but typical; Franz Josef Dölger had already dealt in detail with these correlations in his book about exorcism as did Klaus Thraede in the “Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum”.⁸⁰ What interests us at this point is not the history of the tradition of these exorcism prayers dealt with in Dölger and Thraede, but ultimately the type of transformation that becomes recognisable through the recoinage of the expression ἡ ἐναντία δύναμις the wording of which is generally maintained throughout in Porphyry into the expression *aduersae potestatae satellites* used in Calcidius. In Berlin we refer to this form of transformation in which a semantic shift takes place as reinterpretation or inversion.⁸¹

⁷⁵ Thus also Dillon (2004), 140.

⁷⁶ Cf. the evidence in Blaise, *Dictionnaire*, 52.

⁷⁷ PsG/H 73.10 ... *inirritat adversarius nomen tuum in finem*; cf. Greek ἕως πότε ὁ θεός ὀνειδιεῖ ὁ ἐχθρὸς παροξυνεῖ ὁ ὑπεναντίας τὸ ὄνομά σου εἰς τέλος.

⁷⁸ Vogel (1986), 107f. – The name *Gothicum* comes from a late inscription on the top right edge of the manuscript Vaticanus Reginus Latinus 317 (likewise from the late seventh or early eighth century); the manuscript of the fifth century is objectively incorrect, since the text in question is a missal, which is to be attributed to the so-called Gallican liturgical family.

⁷⁹ *Missale Gothicum* (Vat. Reg. Lat. 317) 33,258: *Exorcizo te, creatura aquae, exorcizo te, omnes exercitus diabuli, omnes potestas aduersariae, omnes umbra daemonum. Exorcizo te in nomine domini nostri Iesu Christi Nazarei* ... (67.10 – 12 Mohlberg).

⁸⁰ Dölger (1909), 73 – 80; Thraede (1969), 91 – 93.

⁸¹ On the terms used here cf. again Bergemann (2011), 48.

4 Concluding Remarks

The reference to the so-called *Missale Gothicum* makes clear that, in addition to magical sources and the philosophical texts we certainly must also look at *liturgical* sources⁸² as well as sermons, if our survey has to be complete to some degree, at least in terms of the literary genres. I would love, for example, to take a look in more detail at the later and late exorcism books that Klaus Thraede most recently compiled again and which are pseudonymously attributed to the church authorities of imperial times and Late Antiquity.⁸³ What images of demons and their influence can be found in these texts?⁸⁴ Does the fact that the scarce stories about possession by demons and healing found on amulets could be taken up by the liturgical texts without many changes⁸⁵ show that here no great difference existed in terms of form or content between the different types of text? Does this impression deceive? With a view to the liturgical texts, there continue to be – similarly as for the amulets – exciting discoveries or reinterpretations of already known texts in the light of new discoveries. I name just one example: In a private letter many years ago, the late Berlin papyrologist Kurt Treu suggested interpreting a papyrus from Yale dated at around the 3rd or 4th century, not as a Christian magic text, but as an early exorcism prayer.⁸⁶ It would be worth looking at the question here as to whether there are predecessors of the exorcism books we have today⁸⁷.

The papyrus also possibly shows how close texts of privately used magical amulets and prayers used in the church were, both in content and form. But more about that at another place and time. Here I have tried, taking the subject area “Demons

⁸² Kotansky (1994), 60f. shows how a *historiola* on the origin of the headache and how to get rid of it can show up on an amulet from Carnuntum (Amulet 13, p. 58–60), as well as on other amulets as and in a prayer from the prayer collection of Cod. Marcianus graec. app. II 163 (Pradel (1907), 267,22–268,10 = 15,22–16,10), each in slightly modified form. As a final example, Kotansky names a text from a Euchologion from the Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai: Ms. 973 (p. 63), translated and annotated by Arnoud (1913), 292–304.

⁸³ Thraede (1969), 109f.

⁸⁴ On the relationship between healing and exorcism, cf. Vielberg (2006), 144–148. 164–166. 188. 205.

⁸⁵ Cf. footnote 83 above.

⁸⁶ Proulx/O’Callaghan (1974); I refer here to the commentary that Treu attached in his personal copy, which is in my possession.

⁸⁷ Cf. for example *EYXOΛOΓION sive Rituale Graecorum: complectens ritus et ordines divinae liturgiae, officiorum, sacramentorum, consecrationum, benedictionum, funerum, orationum, &c. cuilibet personae, statui, vel tempori congruos, juxta usum Orientalis Ecclesiae, cum selectis Bibliothecae Regiae, Barberinae, Cryptae-Ferratae, Sancti Marci Florentini, Tillianae, Allatianae, Coresianae, & aliis probatis MM. SS. & editis Exemplaribus collatum. Interpretatione Latina, nec non mixobarbarum vocum brevi Glossario, aeneis figuris, & observationibus ex antiquis PP. & maxime Graecorum Theologorum expositionibus illustratum*. Opera R.P. Jacobi Goar, Parisini, Ordinis FF. Praedicatorum, S. Theologiae Lectoris. Ed. Secunda Expurgata, & accuratior, Venedig 1730, 575–578 and 578–584. – Cf. also Arranz (1996) and the same (1995).

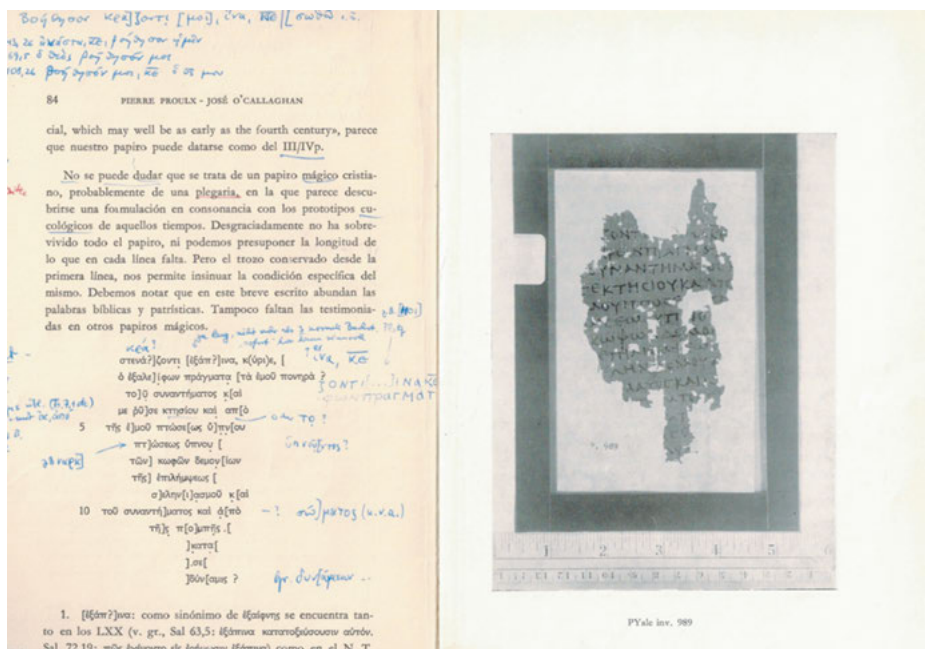


Fig. 5 Yale University Beinecke Library P. CtYBR 989 (with some remarks by Kurt Treu) Cf. <http://www.trismegistos.org/magic/detail.php?tm=64257> (Last Access: 24.01.2016) and also *Supplementum Magicum*. Vol. II, Daniel/Maltomini (1992), no. 84 pp. 175–179 and Betz (1992²), 1–14 p. 313.

and Disease” to take stock of the state of research and to move forward on some points. To do so, I started by remembering two basic methodological insights and, following that, I proceeded to go through the different sources arranged according to their literary genres, taking a look at the question concerning how demons function in these texts as *a basis for explaining diseases* and their healing. With the help of the Berlin terminology of transformation, we have ultimately attempted to describe to what extent pagan concepts of demons transformed or were adopted – a similar reconnaissance mission could be performed for the acquired Judean ideas.⁸⁸ In the process, it became clear, time and again, how little the available source material has been made use of to date and what rich rewards are promised if the traps of certain classic dualisms are avoided and newer research paradigms are resolutely used. The inescapable conclusion that in the ancient world explanations of the causes of diseases were dependent on textual types and literary genres may be generalised without hesitation: This conclusion is valid even today, although so much has changed since the ancient world, and not only with regard to medicine.

⁸⁸ Cf. here: Busch (2006).

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